

Focus  
on  
Glaucoma:  
A Community  
Guide



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This guide is part of the National Eye Health Education Program **Glaucoma Community Education Kit**. The kit contains sample education materials designed to be used in conjunction with many of the activities listed in this guide. If you do not have a Community Education Kit, call the NEHEP toll free at 1-800-869-2020.



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National Eye Health Education Program, Box 20/20, Bethesda, MD 20892

National Eye Institute  
National Institutes of Health ■ Public Health Service  
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services



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### ***See the Blue Pages***

Need ideas? Here are some suggestions for  
program activities that can help in . . .

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# Introduction

**G**laucoma is a leading cause of blindness in the United States. Yet with early diagnosis and treatment, this disease can be controlled before it causes serious vision loss or blindness. Education is of vital importance. People need to know that they can save their sight.

In this guide, you will find the information you need to put together an effective glaucoma education program to convey the message of the National Eye Health Education Program (NEHEP): *Get your eyes examined. Don't lose sight of glaucoma.* This guide tells how to choose the activities that will fit your community and organization. The guide divides program planning into four steps:

1. *Lay the foundation.* Get to know the needs and resources in your community, and shape your plan accordingly.
2. *Select activities.* Choose from a wide variety of activities to promote eye health.
3. *Work with others.* Get out the NEHEP message by collaborating with businesses and organizations and working with the media.
4. *Measure your success.* Look at what you have accomplished and learned.

By following these steps, you can create a program that works. A sample program plan appears in Appendix A.

Some communities will have the resources to undertake the major activities suggested in this guide. In other cases, groups will start by choosing more modest activities. No matter what you are able to do, your activities will not be carried out in isolation. Your efforts will count among the many glaucoma education activities being developed all over the country by organizations concerned about eye health, as part of the NEHEP. Together, we can have a positive effect on the eye health of this nation, helping to protect the sight of those at risk for glaucoma.

## **Facts About Glaucoma**

- Glaucoma is a leading cause of blindness among *all* adults over 60.
- Blacks over 40 are up to five times more likely to develop glaucoma.
- People with a family history of glaucoma are at increased risk.
- At first, there are no symptoms. Vision stays normal, and there is no pain.
- Vision loss from glaucoma is permanent.
- Glaucoma can usually be controlled and the risk of blindness reduced if it is detected and treated early.
- People at risk should have their eyes examined through dilated pupils every two years.

The NEHEP *Community Education Kit* includes a fact sheet on glaucoma. Be sure to read all the facts before conducting your glaucoma program.





# Step 1: Lay the Foundation

Successful programs result when the community's needs are considered, specific objectives set, and resources used wisely. Here is information on how to lay the necessary foundation.

## ***Know Your Community's Needs***

Most community education programs begin with the commitment and initiative of one or two people who recognize a need or opportunity. The purpose of a needs assessment is to explore and define these needs and opportunities further. What you learn in this step will help shape the rest of your program.

## ***Who Is the Audience?***

The primary audiences for the first phase of the NEHEP are people at risk for glaucoma: Blacks over age 40 and all people over age 60. Research shows that many people in these groups are not aware of their risk or how to reduce it.

Which audience you choose for your program may depend on the number of people at risk in your community. You also could choose one segment of a larger audience, such as women, who most often make the health care decisions for their families, or people in a certain neighborhood.

To identify your target audience:

- Check data from your local health department, social service agency, or planning agency to find out the number of people at increased risk in your community and where they live.
- Find out which organizations these people belong to and where they meet.
- Ask community leaders about the best ways to reach your audience.
- Ask newspapers and broadcast stations who their readers, listeners, and viewers are.

### ***Target Audiences for Glaucoma Education***

- Blacks over 40
- All people over 60
- People with a family history of glaucoma
- People with diabetes
- People who influence those at risk, including
  - Family members of at-risk individuals
  - Health care professionals (e.g., primary care physicians, nurses, and pharmacists)
  - Others, such as clergy

## What Are Others Doing?

You will need to find out whether other glaucoma or eye health education programs are ongoing in your community. If similar programs are planned or underway, try not to duplicate them. Instead, join forces with them if possible. The ties you establish with other groups can help glaucoma remain a priority in your community over time.

Consider linking your promotional efforts to those of other health programs. For example, a church-based high blood pressure screening program targeted to Blacks could include information on the risk of glaucoma and the need for eye examinations through dilated pupils.

To find out about other programs:

- Contact the local affiliates of NEHEP Partners (see the NEHEP Partnership Directory in the Glaucoma Community Education Kit).
- Contact local health departments, hospitals, health maintenance organizations (HMOs), and clinics.
- Contact local voluntary health organizations, the United Way, and health professional organizations.

## Know Your Objectives

Before you begin program activities, consider their purpose. You have a better chance of having an impact if you focus on a few well-defined objectives.

The NEHEP is a national program with broad objectives that can serve as a guide for many communities. However,

every community has its own unique combination of people, organizations, needs, and concerns, so glaucoma education programs will take different forms in different places.

To select objectives for your program, consider the NEHEP objectives (see box below). Which is most appropriate for your community? If you found during your needs assessment that no eye health education programs had taken place recently and that community leaders believe few people are aware of glaucoma, your initial objective might be to increase awareness. If, however, another group is already promoting eye health, you might focus on motivating people to make appointments for eye examinations through dilated pupils. Use these objectives as models, and adapt them to your community's needs.

### ***National Eye Health Education Program Glaucoma Objectives***

- To increase awareness of the risk factors for glaucoma among the public, especially among those at risk.
- To increase knowledge that early detection and treatment may reduce the risk of blindness from glaucoma.
- To encourage regular eye examinations through dilated pupils and followup with appropriate care.
- To encourage inquiries for more information, especially from those at risk.

A comprehensive program would include all of the NEHEP's broad objectives. Most community organizations find that they can take on one or two objectives at a time, then add to or alter

their strategies as the program progresses or community needs change. See the blue pages of this guide for ideas about activities for different stages of a program.

### ***Know Your Resources***

Consider your resources: staff time, funds, and facilities, as well as expertise, contacts, and credibility. Sometimes commitment and enthusiasm can be your most valuable resources.

You may need to find resources outside of your own organization. Potential sources of support include local affiliates of NEHEP Partners, businesses,

media, and volunteer organizations. They may be able to help you not only with funds but also with in-kind donations. For example, a printer might agree to reproduce materials or an advertiser might agree to donate a billboard for your program.

If you need extra funds to accomplish what you want to do, consider applying for small grants from local corporations or foundations. Voluntary and civic groups and even retailers—such as pharmacies or vision care stores—also may provide small donations, especially if your program publicity can acknowledge their contribution.

### ***Some Tips for Working With Volunteers***

1. Select volunteers with these attributes:
  - Contacts and credibility with and respect for your target audience.
  - Commitment to completing orientation or training and volunteering a specified amount of time on a regular basis.
  - Commitment to provide the kinds of help you need.
  - Commitment to your glaucoma education program over time.
2. Manage your volunteer program carefully:
  - Offer training or orientation at convenient times and locations.
  - Offer free parking, lunch or coffee breaks, or other small incentives.
  - Consider a contract specifying your role and theirs.
  - Set firm schedules.
  - Be clear about expectations and standards for performance.
  - Provide support and feedback.
3. Reward your volunteers informally with frequent “thank you’s” and formally with a recognition lunch, certificate, or small gift such as a coffee mug or T-shirt.



This guide is part of the National Eye Health Education Program's free **Glaucoma Community Education Kit** designed for community leaders and volunteers. The kit includes the following items:

**Don't Lose Sight of Glaucoma** (*brochure with information about the disease, how to detect the disease, and current treatment available*)

**Glaucoma Eye-Q Test** (*10 true-false questions with answers for learning more about glaucoma*)

#### **Posters**

**You Could Be Going Blind and Not Even Know It** (*poster urging people at risk for glaucoma to have their eyes examined; two sizes: 16x22-1/2 inch and 16x24 inch, with space for imprinting name of organization*)

**Event Poster** (*same design as above with space for event description, date, and time; 11x17 inch*)

**Live Radio Announcer Copy** (*PSAs for distribution to local radio stations*)

**Print Ads** (*camera-ready ads for use in a variety of publications, including newsletters, newspapers, and magazines*)

**Fact Sheet on Glaucoma** (*detailed scientific information on glaucoma, including who is at risk, how the disease is detected, and current treatment and research activities*)

**Glaucoma Article/News Release** (*fill-in-the-blank; for organizations to "personalize" and promote their involvement in the NEHEP*)

**Reproducible Art** (*camera-ready illustrations and graphics for use in newsletters, flyers, posters, announcements, and more*)

**National Eye Health Education Program—An Overview** (*fact sheet with background information about the NEHEP*)

**National Eye Health Education Program Partnership Directory** (*listing of NEHEP Partnership organizations*)

To order the complete kit or individual items, call toll free **1-800-869-2020** or send the order form in Appendix B to the National Eye Health Education Program, Box 20/20, Bethesda, MD 20892.

## Step 2: Select Activities

**W**hat can you do? There are many activities to choose from for your glaucoma education program. The ideas here are divided into three levels. Those in Level I require modest amounts of time and other resources. Level II and III activities may be more appropriate if you have more time and resources. But remember, these are only suggestions. You may find that an idea in Level III fits your organization and community right at the beginning. Many of the materials mentioned here are available from the NEHEP and are described on the facing page. Appendix B is an order form.

### ***When Choosing Activities, Remember Your Audience***

- Older people often patronize a library or a grocery store near a senior residence, so these will be the best places to put posters or bulletin board announcements.
- A tenants' or block association's newsletter may be read more attentively and regularly by the people in that building or on that block than a regional newspaper.
- In many communities, older people prefer television to other media and watch daytime television, so this is a good way to reach them.

### ***Level I: Getting Started***

- Ask newspapers and newsletters to publish public service print ads, articles, or editorials.
- Write a news release, op-ed piece, or letter to the editor to announce your new program (see pages 18 to 20).
- Ask employers/businesses to print and display tent cards using NEHEP reproducible art or print ads or to use payroll or bill stuffers (especially for utility company, bank, and credit card statements).
- Ask churches and synagogues to include the NEHEP articles or print ads in their newsletters or to distribute brochures after services or social events.
- Ask large companies to pay for placement of radio or newspaper ads about your program.
- Ask advertisers to include the NEHEP print ads or reproducible art in their ads in local newspapers.
- Ask local businesses if they have printing capabilities and can reprint NEHEP materials (offer a credit line on the materials acknowledging their donation).
- Provide tent cards or brochures for distribution at cosmetic counters in department stores.

- Establish a glaucoma education center in your office, at a local library, at major worksites, or at other walk-in locations.
- Ask employers to distribute brochures at annual employee health examinations and to include information in pre-retirement planning seminars.
- Ask unions to distribute NEHEP materials to their members who are at risk for glaucoma.
- Ask merchants to display posters and tent cards, use bag stuffers for customers, include a glaucoma message on store receipts, or make announcements over store loudspeakers.
- Prepare scoreboard or loudspeaker announcements for sports events, rodeos, concerts, or bingo games.
- Send letters about your plans to the editors of state medical journals, other professional journals, and local newspapers.
- Print and distribute cards for address card files.
- Hold a breakfast for employers, religious leaders, or media representatives, and ask them to cosponsor activities with you.
- Prepare and distribute newsletter articles for employers, neighborhood associations, utility companies, or other organizations with newsletters.

### ***Making a Minidirectory***

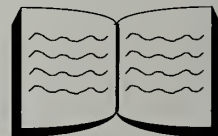
If you are successful in raising awareness of glaucoma, you will receive questions about where people can go for eye examinations through dilated pupils.

A list of local services will be especially useful to speakers and also could be distributed at health fairs, libraries, and other locations.

Ask local affiliates of NEHEP Partners if they have such a list or can help you compile one. Call your state or county medical society, ophthalmologic and optometric associations, and hospitals for the names and addresses of eye care professionals. Don't overlook the telephone yellow pages!

This minidirectory of local services could also include costs, options for reduced-fee services, reimbursement policies, services performed, and hours of availability.

Information on Medicare and Medicaid reimbursement for eye care also will be useful. In general, Medicare will not cover preventive eye examinations, but if the examination is related to an existing eye problem, costs will be covered. Medicaid regulations vary by state. Contact your state's department of health or social services or a local social service office for more information.





## Level II: Enhancing Your Program

- Ask producers of radio call-in shows and television public affairs shows to feature eye health; offer to provide background information on glaucoma, sample questions and answers, and someone to interview.
- Arrange for a glaucoma expert or someone who represents your program to appear on a television or radio talk show.



- Ask retailers, banks, or other merchants to sponsor an eye health event or seminar or to distribute information.
- Ask shopping mall management to sponsor a health fair, make room for an exhibit, or provide space for a “questions and answers about glaucoma” table or booth.
- Ask high school clubs or art classes to design and construct banners or portable exhibits for use at community events.
- Hold a glaucoma poster contest (for students) or an art exhibit (for senior citizens) offering donated prizes. Exhibit entries in a mall, community

center, library, local airport, or other public place.

- Create a genealogy kit that includes information about identifying family risks for glaucoma for distribution at family reunions or religious events.
- Ask a cable TV station to help you produce a program about glaucoma. After the broadcast, use the videotape in community programs.
- Work with merchants to promote special gifts related to eye health for Grandparents’ Day, Mother’s Day, Father’s Day, and other special days or weeks.
- Ask employers to establish incentives for at-risk employees to have their eyes examined.
- Ask hospitals to include your program information in continuing medical education programs.
- Ask health care providers to record and play a message about glaucoma to callers who are put on hold.
- Ask your mayor or governor to proclaim a glaucoma awareness day or week. (See sample proclamation on next page.)
- Order coffee mugs, buttons, or T-shirts with the NEHEP message and logo for your volunteers to wear at special events, for sale at events, and to give to contributors as a “thank you.”
- Imprint balloons with the NEHEP message and logo to mark the spot at special events.

## Sample Proclamation

### *Glaucoma Awareness Month/Week/Day*

Glaucoma is a leading cause of blindness in the United States. People at risk include Blacks over the age of 40, everyone over the age of 60, and people with a family history of glaucoma.

Glaucoma is five times more likely to occur in Blacks than in Whites and about four times more likely to cause blindness in Blacks than in Whites.

Research shows that the risk of blindness from glaucoma can be reduced with early detection and treatment. An eye examination through dilated pupils is necessary to detect glaucoma.

There is a compelling need to inform the public about the need for regular, comprehensive eye examinations through dilated pupils to reduce the risk of blindness from glaucoma.

In recognition of the importance of early detection and treatment for glaucoma, I [name], [title] of the [state or city] of [name], do hereby proclaim [date] as Glaucoma Awareness [month/week/day]. I urge Blacks over 40 years of age and everyone over 60 to become aware that they are at risk for glaucoma and to have their eyes examined through dilated pupils every two years.



*Signature*

ADAPT THIS  
SAMPLE FOR  
USE IN YOUR  
CITY OR STATE

## Special Events

Many activities, especially if scheduled to coincide with an eye health day or week, can help get even more attention. Here are some national dates:

<i>Glaucoma Awareness Week</i>	January
<i>National Eye Health Care Month</i>	January
<i>Black History Month</i>	February
<i>Save Your Vision Week</i>	March
<i>National Sight Saving Month</i>	May
<i>Older Americans Month</i>	May
<i>National Employee Health and Fitness Day</i>	May
<i>Grandparents Day</i>	September
<i>Family Health Month</i>	October

To link local events with these national events, contact their sponsors for ideas and resources (see Appendix C).

Also take advantage of important local dates and community events, including parades, county fairs, health fairs, picnics, family reunions, and sports competitions.

- Imprint refrigerator magnets, pencils, or pens with the NEHEP message to give away at events or as gifts for people who have eye examinations.
- Add questions about glaucoma to health risk appraisals conducted by employer or other wellness programs.
- Imprint theme cups for sports events and health fairs. Imprint bags at supermarkets and pharmacies. Imprint tray inserts at fast food chains.

- Ask a radio station to broadcast live from your event, and provide family members and experts to be interviewed about eye health. (See page 20 for interview tips.)
- Ask a radio station to participate in your glaucoma awareness day or other special day by broadcasting a glaucoma message each hour; provide broadcasters with live announcer copy.
- Work with billboard and transit companies to seek public service space where it is most likely to reach your audience.

## Level III: Broadening Your Scope

- Develop a speakers' program and offer presentations to community hospitals, churches, libraries, recreation centers, club meetings, and worksite brown bag lunches; identify speakers (e.g., health care providers, glaucoma patients, media spokespersons), and provide them with a prepared speech or talking points.





- Develop inservice training seminars at medical, health, and social service agencies.
- Develop prescription (referral) pads and buttons for office nurses and physicians. Remind family practice and other physicians to refer their patients at risk for glaucoma for comprehensive eye examinations. (Patients, especially older ones, are likely to listen to and follow the advice of their doctors.)
- Offer time-limited coupons for reduced-cost eye examinations for persons with limited or no health insurance or with demonstrated financial need through pharmacies, health centers, retirement communities, or places of worship.
- Time public service announcements (PSAs) to coincide with promotions for a senior fair or dance, a Senior Olympics event, a Walk for Health, or an older adult center open house; staff a booth or exhibit at the activity.
- Assemble a gift package (including coupons and samples from local merchants) for a speaker's audience or people who get eye examinations.
- Keep a list of people who visit an exhibit or booth, and send followup cards to remind them that they should have an eye examination through dilated pupils.
- Publish a periodic eye health newsletter to highlight medical facts, community news and events, and suggestions for ways to get involved in your program.
- Ask a local college health education, marketing, or communications department or a public relations firm to conduct a community survey about glaucoma awareness. Publicize the results.
- Set up a program for individuals who need transportation to eye care professionals' offices.
- Work to extend insurance coverage of comprehensive eye examinations—beginning with your own employer's insurer—if these examinations are not covered.

*Note:* If you know of activities not included here, please share them with the NEHEP so that they can be included in a future edition of this guide. A program reporting form to send to the NEHEP is included in Appendix D.



## Step 3: Work With Others

**B**y working with others, you can reach more members of your target audience and have more resources for accomplishing your program objectives. You can work with businesses, organizations, and the media to help get your glaucoma information to your target audience.

### ***Work With Businesses and Organizations***

No one person or organization can do everything needed to educate a community about glaucoma, but a community working together can have a major impact. You can increase the effectiveness of your program by forming partnerships with local businesses and organizations.

### ***Form Local Partnerships***

Partnerships can broaden the foundation of your program by adding the commitment of other organizations to the total glaucoma program—not just one task or activity. Like the NEHEP on a national level, local Partnerships combine the strengths of several groups to help gain access to audiences and provide resources.

Partnerships also can help you:

- Identify existing or planned glaucoma programs and services.

- Decide on priorities among the gaps in programs and services available.
- Increase the attention to and priority of the issue within your community.
- Raise funds.

You can expand your program potential by involving other groups that are interested in eye health specifically or in the general health and well-being of their members or the people they serve. Consider forming a planning or advisory committee to help you get started. Select members who can provide credibility, expertise, endorsement, or contacts and who will be committed to help. You may want to include representatives from the community sectors that you would like to involve later. To make a large committee more productive, form subcommittees to help with specific aspects of the program, such as public awareness, resource development, health care provider involvement, and evaluation.



Ask representatives of your audience to help you plan. They can find out what the audience wants (as well as needs), who can help, and what will work and what will not. They can lend their credibility to what you do, and their involvement will both give them a feeling of ownership of the program and increase their commitment. If you are working alone at first, your activities could generate a wider interest and eventually lead to the formation of a local Partnership to promote glaucoma education.

### Choose From Many Organizations

Following are examples of some of the businesses and organizations to consider involving in your program.

**Community groups.** Many national organizations with local affiliates already are participating in the NEHEP Partnership, including the American Association of Retired Persons, the

### ***Selecting Partners***

Choose groups that:

- Fit with your program purpose.
- Have access to and credibility with your audience.
- Influence other groups or community sectors.
- Can make a potentially significant contribution.
- Are willing to work with others.
- Have expertise or experience with your program needs.

National Black Nurses Association, and others. Also consider the American Red Cross and other organizations that offer services to your audience, neighborhood associations in areas where your audiences live, United Way or Community Chest organizations serving your audience, other civic groups, fraternities and sororities, and social service organizations.

### ***How to Increase the Effectiveness of Your Partnership***

- Gain the support and endorsement of community leaders to help organize the coalition.
- Identify and address areas of agreement between members; agree to leave differences for discussion at another forum.
- Tackle your community's glaucoma needs one step at a time.
- Ask members to contribute something, according to their individual capabilities to do so.
- Make sure that participation offers a benefit for each organization and individual.
- Share recognition and rewards with all members.
- Periodically assess the purpose and focus of the partnership.



### ***How to Approach Other Groups***

- Make the initial contact through personal acquaintances, if possible. Match your needs with the organizations that could help.
- Write, call, or meet to describe your program, what you expect to accomplish, and the benefits derived from participation.
- Give several options for involvement.
- Choose specific, short-term activities that are likely to be successful.
- Ask for a definite commitment to one or several tasks.
- Be prepared to give something in return (e.g., credit lines on materials, visibility for their logo, media attention).
- Clarify responsibilities on both sides.
- Schedule and identify persons for followup contacts.
- Encourage new relationships and seek new opportunities to work together.
- Say thank you—with a letter, a certificate, or public recognition of their contribution.

**Health care providers.** The awareness, endorsement, and participation of many kinds of health care providers—such as ophthalmologists, optometrists, family practitioners, internists, nurses, nurse practitioners, and pharmacists—is vital. Health professionals are in the best position to refer people for appropriate eye examinations, and they probably will be the most credible sources of eye health information—if they have access to your audience. You can reach health professionals through their professional associations as well as at their places of work. Don't forget to consider roles for student medical associations if there is a medical school in your community.

HMOs and community hospitals frequently recognize health promotion as a way of cutting costs or attracting new patients. Departments that may be willing to work with you include marketing, patient education, public relations, wellness, and continuing medical education. Some hospitals have an

auxiliary group that could provide volunteers.

**Health insurers.** These often provide health education materials and programs to their client companies or policy holders. There also are many examples of health insurance companies cosponsoring community health promotion programs with community organizations.

**Worksites.** The workplace may be the only established setting where you can reach large numbers of some adult populations. Your local Chamber of Commerce can provide a list of major employers. The Chamber also may be able to help identify local business coalitions on health. For major employers of your target audience, contact the occupational health officer or the employee benefits manager to discuss how a program on eye health could fit into organizational health education or employee benefits programs. Unions also may have education programs that could include information about glaucoma.

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## ***How Other Groups Can Help You Spread the Word***

### **Senior centers, libraries**

- bulletin boards
- posters and handouts
- exhibits

### **Retail stores**

- tent cards
- imprinted bags
- bag stuffers
- loudspeaker announcements
- banners
- posters and handouts

### **Religious groups**

- newsletter articles
- bulletin boards
- discussion groups

### **Health clinics and hospitals**

- outreach newsletters
- posters and handouts
- imprinted prescription pads
- counseling

### **Worksites**

- internal newsletter articles
- paycheck stuffers
- recorded, on-hold telephone messages
- lunch seminars

### **Community groups**

- newsletters
- speakers
- display booths
- meeting announcements
- posters and handouts

religious institutions have a tradition of family and community service and a strong volunteer system. In fact, some already have established health promotion policies and programs. Other factors that make churches and synagogues an important part of community outreach are (1) they are respected as information sources and may have access to traditionally hard-to-reach populations, (2) they have social support services that could help people diagnosed with eye problems, and (3) many have programs or residences for older citizens.

**Businesses.** Supermarkets, department or other stores that sell eye makeup and sunglasses, vision care stores, banks, and beauty or barber shops all may provide access to your audience, and they may recognize that participation in health promotion programs can help their community relations.

**Government.** Low-income groups traditionally have been underserved by private health care providers but are important clients of public health agencies. These agencies usually have experience with other health promotion programs. In addition to local health departments and neighborhood and rural health clinics, consider contacting libraries, area offices on aging, Social Security offices, the Cooperative Extension Service, and housing authorities.

**Colleges and universities.** Ask teachers of nursing, public health, health education, and marketing to consider assigning student projects or internships, with credit, to fit your program needs.

**Religious groups.** Churches and synagogues reach Americans of all ages, economic situations, and cultures. Many

**Other community options.** Other links to your audience include residences for older adults, senior citizen centers and senior meal sites, meals-on-wheels programs, and college campus programs for senior citizens.

### **Work With the Media**

The mass media can be an integral part of your glaucoma education program. Many of the activities suggested in the blue pages involve working with the media; others, such as establishing an

information center or holding a seminar on eye health, will need publicity to be successful.

Publicity also can extend the impact of your activities. A special event—such as the engagement of a speaker at a club's luncheon—can be preceded and followed by publicity about the speaker on the radio, in TV announcements, and in the local newspaper. This helps get the message out to a larger audience.

Also keep in mind that mass media outlets may be interested in doing more than just providing publicity. Many large-scale, community-based health programs have been cosponsored by a television station, a health insurance company, and a voluntary or public agency, each contributing according to their special capabilities.

### **Start a Media List**

A card file with a list of media contacts may be your single most important resource, say public relations experts. Don't be tempted to skip this step. When you know the names, telephone and FAX numbers, and special interests of individual journalists, you can send materials and news releases directly to those most likely to use them.

#### **Mass Media**

##### **Television and radio stations**

- local news and talk shows
- broadcast editorials
- public service announcements (live and prerecorded)
- call-in shows
- public affairs and health programs

##### **Public access cable TV**

##### **Local newspapers (weekly and daily)**

- news
- feature articles
- health sections and supplements
- editorials
- columns
- print ads
- letters to the editor
- op-ed articles

##### **Local or regional magazines**

- articles
- regular columns or features

##### **Billboards**

##### **Bus and subway advertisements**





To start a media list, scan newspapers and monitor radio and TV shows to learn the names of reporters who cover health topics. You also can check media directories, which are available at libraries or through organizations such as the Public Relations Society of America (see Appendix C).

When you call or visit the people on your media list, ask about deadlines, special interests, and informational needs. Add this information to your list.

### Make Initial Contacts

Whenever you can, arrange to meet face-to-face with reporters, editors, and producers. Bring your article, news release, radio live announcer copy, or any other materials you want them to use. If you are asking them to cover an event, have some written background information about it to leave behind.

Emphasize the importance of glaucoma education to the community. You also might use this opportunity to offer your services, if appropriate, as an expert resource on eye health who can be called upon in the future. If you have designated a program spokesperson—a key leader who will be the public speaker about glaucoma—tell media contacts about that person. Be sure to leave your card or telephone number.

If you send materials to the people on your media list, allow four to seven days for the materials to arrive, and then call your contacts. Ask if they have received the materials, offer to answer any

questions, and emphasize the important points related to your community. If a story does appear, send a short note of thanks.

### Prepare News Releases

News releases are standard publicity tools, and reporters and editors receive many each week. To draw attention to your release, format it professionally (see sample on facing page), and send it to your established contacts. You may follow up later by telephone.

Keep in mind reporters' and editors' needs as you write a news release. Journalists are most likely to find your release useful if you:

- Present information that is new, timely, and unusual.
- Use a local or human interest angle if you present national data.
- Tie your story to a national event or one that is already receiving wide coverage.

### What Makes News?

Think in terms of headlines like these:

*Senior Citizens in Northwest Learn How to Keep Their Sight*

*Black Business Leaders' Breakfast Features Glaucoma Expert*

*Library Unveils New Information Center on Vision*

*Park Ridge Citizens Walk for Glaucoma*

## Sample News Release

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

April 6, 1992  
CONTACT: (your name)  
(phone number)

RELEASE DATE  
CONTACT

### WALK FOR GLAUCOMA SET FOR APRIL 26TH

The local chapter of the \_\_\_\_\_ will sponsor a Walk for Glaucoma on Saturday, April 25, to call attention to this leading cause of blindness in the United States. Starting at 2 p.m., walkers will set out from Central Park's Murray Street Entrance and follow the two-mile path that winds through the Rhododendron Woods, the Dutch Tulip Gardens, and the Herb Garden.

WHO  
WHAT  
HOW  
WHERE  
WHEN  
WHY

The walk will end at the Park Tea Room. Participants will receive an herb seedling, courtesy of the First Baptist Church Women's Club, and a T-shirt with the message "Don't Lose Sight of Glaucoma."

The purpose of the walk is to increase public awareness of this serious disease. "Many people don't know they have glaucoma," explained \_\_\_\_\_, president of the \_\_\_\_\_. "But glaucoma can usually be controlled if it is detected and treated early enough."

\_\_\_\_\_ said that people at high risk for glaucoma should have eye examinations through dilated pupils every two years. People at high risk are Blacks over age 40, all people over age 60, and anyone with a family history of the disease.

The \_\_\_\_\_ is sponsoring the walk as part of its participation in the National Eye Health Education Program, coordinated by the National Eye Institute, a component of the Federal Government.

For more information about the walk or glaucoma, call \_\_\_\_\_.

## Prepare Editorials, Op-Eds, and Letters to the Editor

Often the most widely read part of the paper, the editorial section is a good place to express a viewpoint or announce your services. Editorial pages often include letters to the editor and op-eds.

Op-eds are articles, usually 500 to 800 words long, that carry an author's byline. They appear on the page opposite the editorial page and present an expert point of view on a specific topic. An op-ed might be titled, for example, "Is Glaucoma Clouding the Future of Black Americans?"

To place an editorial or op-ed piece, contact the editorial page editor, or, in a smaller newspaper, the editor-in-chief. At television stations, which sometimes deliver editorials on important local issues, contact the editorial writer or general manager.

### ***Keys to Success***

- Keep letters to the editor and editorials short. Op-ed pieces can be longer.
- Make sure your arguments and tone are logical and persuasive.
- Provide background information, copies of recent news releases, or stories about your program to convince editors that your editorial or op-ed is important to the community.
- Ask for and follow style guidelines, and deliver your piece on or before the paper's deadline.

## Give Interviews

Talk shows, call-in shows, and public affairs programs all provide publicity opportunities, often in the form of interviews. Newspaper and magazine editors also may be interested in interviewing a community leader or expert.

To arrange for an interview:

- Choose a program or publication that reaches your audience.
- Send a letter to its producer or editor, explaining that you would like to talk about glaucoma and why an interview would be of interest to readers or listeners.
- Follow up the letter with a telephone call.
- Send briefing materials to the interviewer or producer, including your credentials as an expert.

Prepare thoroughly for the interview. Organize your information and write important points on notecards if necessary. Although the interviewer will have questions, you can keep key message points in mind and be prepared to make simple, direct, easy-to-understand statements when they fit the questions.

After the interview, get back to the reporter promptly (preferably the same day) with any information you promised to supply following the interview. Finally, send a note thanking the reporter for the opportunity to express your point of view.





### ***Tips for Television***

To make the most of a TV appearance:

- Avoid clothes with checks, stripes, and patterns. Medium-tone grey, blue, brown, or mixed colors are preferable.
- Avoid solid white blouses and shirts. Grey or light blue shades give the best effect.
- Avoid flashy accessories and jewelry that will catch the light. Don't wear glasses that turn dark in sunlight; they will darken under the strong TV lights.
- Resist the temptation to bend into the microphone; sit or stand up straight. Don't fold your arms.
- Keep your eyes on the interviewer. Do not look at the camera or studio monitor.
- Use natural gestures but avoid rapid hand movements that are difficult for the camera to follow.
- Never assume you are off camera just because someone else is talking; you may still be in range.

### **Place Billboard and Transit Ads**

Billboard space is not always sold out, especially in low-income communities, where many billboards are located. Unsold space may be available for public service campaigns. Approach the company that owns the billboard and ask for donated space. As part of a public service project, the company also may create the billboard, using the NEHEP logo and messages.

Advertisement cards on buses and subways are another way to publicize your program. Most transit systems are publicly owned, and often they are willing to donate space and help you create a transit card to fill it. The system may charge you a small fee to cover labor for printing or posting the cards.



## Step 4: Measure Your Success

**W**hat have you accomplished? No matter what your resources, it's a good idea to step back periodically and take a look at how and whether your program is working. This process of evaluation is well worth the effort. It lets you identify small problems and make adjustments before major ones develop. It also helps you monitor schedules and budgets. Finally, it allows staff, volunteers, and the rest of the community to see what has been accomplished—an important ingredient in maintaining momentum and enthusiasm for your program.

Evaluation can help you:

- Make sure your program is on time, on budget, and reaching your audience.
- Identify any program components that are not working, so that you can make necessary improvements.
- Identify program activities that are very successful, so that you can embellish them or promote your success.
- Make sure that cooperating organizations are doing what they promised and are satisfied with their roles.
- Provide evidence that you have reached your objectives.
- Plan future education programs.

### ***Monitor Materials Dissemination***

Track the number of materials being distributed to your audience at the various spots you chose for dissemination, such as health fairs or local merchants. For example, how many of the brochures left at the senior housing complex have been taken? If the number seems low, try to make adjustments. Are they in an out-of-the-way spot? Could they be moved?

### ***Monitor Your Program Timetable***

Check periodically to ensure that deadlines are being met and resources used efficiently.

- Are activities taking place when scheduled? If not, examine procedures.
- Do you need to make schedules more realistic or to assign more people to a certain task?

### ***Track and Analyze Media Coverage***

Scan newspapers and monitor radio and television programs to learn whether and how often your program receives coverage.

- How many articles, editorials, or letters have been published by the newspapers you contacted?
- How often has a radio station used the live announcer copy you sent?

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If media coverage seems low, call your media contacts to remind them of the importance of your program. Ask if they need different formats or other kinds of information.

### **Monitor Audience Response**

To learn whether you are reaching your audience, you could track the number of people who respond as a result of your activities. Measures might include:

- The number of people who stop at glaucoma booths at health fairs or malls.
- The size of audiences at presentations.

Keep track of the kinds of questions people ask to help you design future activities that meet audience needs.

### **Obtain Feedback**

Ask for feedback from cooperating organizations, volunteers, and other participants. Give them a chance to comment on their involvement with your organization or a particular activity. A brief evaluation form could ask:

- What worked particularly well?
- Which areas need improvement?
- How can improvements be made?
- What would they be willing to do next?

### **Use Evaluation Results**

Whatever form of evaluation you choose, be sure to use the results. Modify procedures, look for more effective ways

to distribute materials, shift resources, or make other refinements if necessary.

Above all, share your successes and lessons learned. Writing and speaking about your program's achievements is a good way to make other community groups and professionals more aware of glaucoma and the NEHEP. Don't forget to let NEHEP Partnership organizations know about your program. A reporting form is included in the kit.

### **What Next?**

Once the first phase of a program has been completed, many organizers find that the initial enthusiasm for their program wanes. Glaucoma education in your community will require sustained attention. Assess the strengths and weaknesses of your accomplishments, think about how your community's needs and interests may have changed, and consider the following activities:

- Publicizing your successes and visibly showing your appreciation to your sponsors and participants.
- Adding other types of activities.
- Broadening or repeating the activities that seem to work best.
- Approaching potential sponsors who were not able to help before, telling them about your successes, and asking for a commitment in the next phase of your program.
- Focusing on integrating glaucoma education into existing programs.

# Appendixes





## Appendix A: Sample Program Plan

<b>Key Message:</b>	Get your eyes examined. Don't lose sight of glaucoma.
<b>Audience:</b>	Black women over 40 years old
<b>Objectives:</b>	<p>To increase awareness and knowledge of glaucoma among Black women over 40.</p> <p>To increase the number of Black women who make appointments for eye examinations (including pupil dilation) for themselves and their family members 40 years or older.</p>
<b>Materials:</b>	<p>NEHEP poster</p> <p>NEHEP brochure</p> <p>Resource list: where to get an eye exam in our community</p> <p>Radio live announcer copy</p>
<b>Other Resources:</b>	<p>Donated printing from ABC printers</p> <p>Three months' billboard space from Acme Department Store</p> <p>Speakers for women's meetings from XYZ sorority</p>
<b>Groups to Involve:</b>	
■ <b>Businesses:</b>	<p>Three largest employers of Black women</p> <p>Grocery, drug, and convenience stores in selected neighborhoods</p> <p>Selected beauty shops</p>
■ <b>Organizations:</b>	<p>Selected churches, sororities, and social clubs</p> <p>Local affiliates of NEHEP Partners</p>
■ <b>Health Care Providers:</b>	<p>Local HMO</p> <p>Two hospitals with community outreach programs</p> <p>Two community health centers</p>
■ <b>Government Agencies:</b>	<p>Libraries in selected neighborhoods</p> <p>Social Security offices</p>
<b>Community Activities:</b>	<p>Distribute NEHEP materials</p> <p>Develop and print list of eye exam sources</p> <p>Make presentations at four sorority meetings</p>
<b>Media Activities:</b>	<p>Appear on two call-in shows on Black-oriented radio programs</p> <p>Place billboards in selected neighborhoods</p> <p>Place bus cards on city buses</p>
<b>Evaluation:</b>	<p>Track number of materials distributed</p> <p>Track call-in show response</p> <p>Track number of dilated eye exams performed by selected facilities</p> <p>Survey patients at selected facilities on knowledge, sources of information</p>



# Appendix B: Order Form for NEHEP Materials

## ORDER FORM

The National Eye Health Education Program's free **Glaucoma Community Education Kit** is designed for community leaders and volunteers. To order the full kit or individual items, call toll free at **1-800-869-2020** or send this form to the National Eye Health Education Program, Box 20/20, Bethesda, MD 20892.

Item	Quantity
<div><b>Glaucoma Community Education Kit</b> <i>(complete kit includes one copy each of items listed below)</i></div>	<hr/>
<b>Individual Kit Items:</b>	
<b>Don't Lose Sight of Glaucoma</b> <i>(brochure with information about the disease, how to detect it, and current treatment available)</i>	<hr/>
<b>Glaucoma Eye-Q Test</b> <i>(10 true-false questions with answers for learning more about glaucoma)</i>	<hr/>
<b>Posters</b>	<hr/>
<b>You Could Be Going Blind and Not Even Know It</b> <i>(poster urging people at risk for glaucoma to have their eyes examined; two sizes: 16x22-1/2 inch and 16x24 inch, with space for imprinting name of organization)</i>	<hr/>
<b>Event Poster</b> <i>(same design as above with space for event description, date, and time; 11x17 inch)</i>	<hr/>
<b>Live Radio Announcer Copy</b> <i>(PSAs for distribution to local radio stations)</i>	<hr/>
<b>Print Ads</b> <i>(camera-ready ads for use in a variety of publications, including newsletters, newspapers, and magazines)</i>	<hr/>
<b>Fact Sheet on Glaucoma</b> <i>(detailed scientific information on glaucoma, including who is at risk, how the disease is detected, and current treatment and research activities)</i>	<hr/>
<b>Reproducible Art</b> <i>(camera-ready illustrations and graphics for use in newsletters, flyers, posters, announcements, and more)</i>	<hr/>

NAME AND TITLE

TELEPHONE

ORGANIZATION

STREET ADDRESS CITY STATE ZIP





## Appendix C: Resources

### **Selected Readings and References for Community Education Programs**

*Burrelle's Special Groups Media Directory, Update* (updated regularly),  
Livingston, NJ: Burrelle's Media  
Directories.

Chisnall, Peter M., *Marketing Research*,  
New York: McGraw Hill, 1986.

Green, Lawrence W., and Lewis, Frances  
Marcus, *Measurement and Evaluation  
in Health Education and Health  
Promotion*, Palo Alto: Mayfield  
Publishing Co., 1986.

Kline, Mark; Chess, Caron; and Sandman,  
Peter, *Evaluating Risk Communication  
Programs: A Catalogue of "Quick and  
Easy" Feedback Methods*, Trenton, NJ:  
New Jersey Dept. of Environmental  
Protection, 1990. Order from Division  
of Science and Research, Risk  
Communication Unit, CN 409,  
Trenton, NJ 08625.

*Locating Resources for Healthy People  
2000 Health Promotion Projects*,  
Washington, DC: Office of Disease  
Prevention and Health Promotion,  
1991. Order from ODPHP National  
Health Information Clearinghouse,  
P.O. Box 1133, Washington, DC  
20013-1133.

*Making Health Communications Work:  
A Planner's Guide*, Bethesda, MD:  
National Cancer Institute, 1988. Order  
from Office of Cancer Communication,  
9000 Rockville Pike, Bethesda, MD  
20892.

*Promoting Issues and Ideas: A Guide to PR  
for Nonprofit Organizations*, New York:  
The Foundation Center, 1987.

### **National Health Observances: Contact Information**

**January.** Glaucoma Awareness Week.  
National Society to Prevent Blindness,  
500 East Remington Road, Schaumburg,  
IL 60173; (800) 221-3004, (708) 843-2020.  
Contact: Public Relations Department.

**January.** National Eye Health Care  
Month. The Ophthalmic Press and  
Television Information Center  
Foundation, Inc., 5005 Central Avenue,  
St. Petersburg, FL 33710; (813) 323-4999.  
Contact: Public Relations Department.

**March.** Save Your Vision Week. American  
Optometric Association, Communications  
Center, 243 North Lindbergh Boulevard,  
St. Louis, MO 63141; (314) 991-4100.  
Contact: Communications Center.

**May.** National Sight Saving Month.  
National Society to Prevent Blindness,  
500 East Remington Road, Schaumburg,  
IL 60173; (800) 221-3004, (708) 843-2020.  
Contact: Public Relations Department.

**May.** Older Americans Month. Administration on Aging, 330 Independence Avenue, Southwest, Washington, DC 20201; (202) 619-0641. Contact: Office of Technical Information and Dissemination.

**May.** National Employee Health and Fitness Day. National Association of Governor's Councils on Physical Fitness and Sports, 201 South Capital Avenue, Suite 440, Indianapolis, IN 46225; (317) 237-5630. Contact: Public Affairs Department.

**June.** World Diabetes Day. International Diabetes Federation, c/o American Diabetes Association, 1660 Duke Street, Alexandria, VA 22314; (800) 232-3472. Contact: Public Relations Department.

**August.** National Eye Exam Month. National Society to Prevent Blindness, 500 East Remington Road, Schaumburg, IL 60173; (800) 221-3004, (708) 843-2020. Contact: Public Relations Department.

**October.** Family Health Month. American Academy of Family Physicians, 8880 Ward Parkway, Kansas City, MO 64114; (800) 274-2237, (816) 333-9700. Contact: Public Relations Office.

**November.** National Diabetes Month. American Diabetes Association, 1660 Duke Street, Alexandria, VA 22314; (800) 232-3472. Contact: Public Relations Department.





**National Eye Institute**



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